



# New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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## 2002 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

### *Preliminary Farms, Land in Farms, and Operator Demographics*

On February 3, **preliminary** National and State demographic statistics from the 2002 Census of Agriculture were released on the Internet at [www.usda.gov/nass/](http://www.usda.gov/nass/). Data analysis continues through the winter and spring with final statistics from the 2002 Census of Agriculture scheduled to be released June 3, 2004. The 2002 Census of Agriculture introduced new methodology to account for all farms in the United States. Incompleteness in the census mail list has been measured by matching list names against all qualifying operations found through canvassing sample land areas in the region. It is primarily new and small operations, and often women and minority operators, who are under represented on the mail list. For more information on the change in methodology, New England Regional statistics, and individual State statistics, see [www.nass.usda.gov/nh/](http://www.nass.usda.gov/nh/).

The following information offers some brief highlights for the New England region and each State in the region. The official definition of a farm or ranch includes all places where \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year.

The 2002 Census of Agriculture showed there were 28,363 farms in New England, down from 31,601 farms in 1997. Land in farms decreased from 4.1 million acres in 1997 to 4.0 million acres in 2002. Although land in farms decreased, the average farm size increased from 131 acres per farm in 1997 to 142 acres in 2002. Maine, at 7,213 farms, had the largest number of farms in New England, followed by Vermont at 6,596 farms, Massachusetts at 6,074 farms, Connecticut at 4,226 farms, New Hampshire at 3,389 farms, and Rhode Island at 865 farms. There were 492 minority operators in 2002; 243 of them were principal operators.

In 2002, there were a total of 45,636 farm operators on 28,363 farms, with 36 percent of total farm operators

being women. The 2002 census also showed that 67 percent of New England's farm sold less than \$10,000 worth of agricultural products compared with 63 percent in the 1997 census. Forty-seven percent of the region's farms recorded sales of less than \$2,500 in 2002. Eighty-six percent were family or individually owned, up one percentage point from 1997. Slightly over one-half of all farms were 50 acres or more in both 2002 and 1997. Fifty-six percent of principal operators worked off the farm in 2002. Of the principal operators who worked off the farm, 68 percent worked 200 days or more compared with 64 percent in 1997.

Thirty-five percent of total women operators identified themselves as the principal operator of the farm. For these principal operators, 53 percent reported farming as their primary occupation, up three percentage points from 1997. Fifty-three percent worked off the farm in 2002. Of the women operators who worked off the farm, 60 percent of them worked 200 days or more compared with 55 percent of women operators in 1997.

**Connecticut:** There were a total of 6,698 farm operators in 2002 on 4,226 farms, with 34 percent of total farm operators being women. The 2002 census also showed that 68 percent of Connecticut's farms sold less than \$10,000 worth of agricultural products compared with 67 percent in the 1997 census. Forty-seven percent of the State's farms recorded sales of less than \$2,500 in 2002. Eighty-two percent were family or individually owned operations, unchanged from 1997. The average size of the farm at 86 acres increased three acres from 1997. Fifty-five percent of principal operators worked off the farm in 2002 with 71 percent of them working 200 days or more. In 1997, 68 percent of principal operators who worked off the farm worked 200 days or more.

**Selected Abbreviated Historic Highlights of 2002 and 1997 by State**  
*These are preliminary Demographic Statistics from the 2002 Census of Agriculture*

Item	New England	CT	ME	MA	NH	RI	VT
<b>Farms</b>							
2002	28,363	4,226	7,213	6,074	3,389	865	6,596
1997	31,601	4,905	7,404	7,307	3,928	994	7,063
<b>Land in Farms</b>							
2002	4,020,051	362,931	1,366,345	515,167	452,286	61,443	1,261,879
1997	4,140,706	406,222	1,313,066	577,637	463,383	65,083	1,315,315
<b>Average Size Farm</b>							
2002	142	86	189	85	133	71	191
1997	131	83	177	79	118	65	186
<b>Sold &lt; \$10,000</b>							
2002	18,974	2,888	5,142	3,846	2,530	502	4,066
1997	19,891	3,274	4,820	4,340	2,849	597	4,011
<b>Individually Owned</b>							
2002	24,269	3,468	6,383	5,037	2,937	708	5,736
1997	26,915	4,040	6,557	6,023	3,445	789	6,061
<b>All Operators</b>							
Total	45,636	6,698	11,415	9,785	5,582	1,302	10,854
Women	16,238	2,287	4,266	3,484	2,182	405	3,614
Minorities <sup>1/</sup>	492	60	101	130	78	8	115
Hispanic <sup>1/</sup>	924	126	248	227	87	31	205
<b>Principal Operator</b>							
Women							
2002	5,696	874	1,560	1,308	847	145	962
1997 <sup>2/</sup>	5,358	809	1,154	1,368	800	160	1,067
Minority							
2002	243	27	46	73	46	2	49
1997 <sup>2/</sup>	149	26	23	48	6	4	31
Hispanic							
2002	705	93	186	168	66	29	163
1997 <sup>2/</sup>	213	36	48	47	19	8	55
<b>Worked Off the Farm</b>							
2002	16,002	2,308	4,374	3,289	2,009	473	3,549
1997	18,104	2,756	4,404	4,128	2,515	547	3,754
<b>Worked 200+ Days Off the Farm</b>							
2002	10,857	1,650	2,970	2,201	1,324	328	2,384
1997	11,643	1,884	2,747	2,639	1,657	382	2,334

<sup>1/</sup> Data were collected for a maximum of three operators per farm.

<sup>2/</sup> Data for 1997 do not include imputation for item nonresponse.

Thirty-eight percent of total women operators identified themselves as the principal operator of the farm. For these principal women operators, 52 percent recorded farming as their primary occupation, up three percentage points from 1997. Fifty percent of the principal women operators worked off the farm in 2002 with 70 percent of them working 200 or more days per year, up six percentage points from 1997.

**Maine:** There were a total of 11,415 farm operators in 2002 on 7,213 farms, with 37 percent of total farm operators being women. Seventy-one percent of Maine's farms sold less than \$10,000 worth of agricultural products in 2002 compared with 65 percent in the 1997 census. Fifty-two percent of the State's farms recorded sales of less than \$2,500 in 2002. Eighty-eight percent were family or individually owned, down one percentage point from 1997. The average size of the farm increased from 177 acres in 1997 to 189 acres in 2002. Sixty-one percent of principal operators worked off the farm in 2002 with 68 percent of them working 200 days or more. In 1997, 62 percent of principal operators who worked off the farm worked 200 days or more.

Thirty-seven percent of total women operators identified themselves as the principal operator of the farm. For these principal operators, 48 percent recorded farming as their primary occupation, up three percentage points from 1997. Sixty percent of principal women operators worked off the farm in 2002 with 63 percent of them working 200 or more days per year. In 1997, 54 percent of principal women operators who worked off the farm worked 200 days or more.

**Massachusetts:** There were a total of 9,785 farm operators in 2002 on 6,074 farms; 36 percent of total farm operators being women. The 2002 census also showed that 63 percent of Massachusetts' farms sold less than \$10,000 worth of agricultural products compared with 59 percent in the 1997 census. Forty-four percent of the State's farms recorded sales of less than \$2,500 in 2002. Family or individual farm operations, at 83 percent, dominated in Massachusetts. At 85 acres per farm in 2002, the average farm size increased by six acres from 1997. Fifty-four percent of principal operators worked off the farm in 2002 with 67 percent of them working 200 days or more. In 1997, 64 percent of principal operators who worked off the farm worked 200 days or more.

Thirty-eight percent of total women operators identified themselves as the principal operator of the farm. For

these principal operators, 55 percent recorded farming as their primary occupation, up three percentage points from 1997. Forty-eight percent of principal women operators worked off the farm in 2002 with 58 percent of them working 200 or more days per year, compared to 54 percent of principal women operators working 200 days or more in 1997.

**New Hampshire:** There were a total of 5,582 farm operators in 2002 on 3,389 farms, with 39 percent of total farm operators being women. The 2002 census also showed that 75 percent of New Hampshire's farms sold less than \$10,000 worth of agricultural products compared with 73 percent in the 1997 census. Fifty-four percent of the State's farms recorded sales of less than \$2,500 in 2002. Eighty-seven percent were family or individually owned, down one percentage point from 1997. The average farm size increased 15 acres to 133 acres per farm. Fifty-nine percent of principal operators worked off the farm in 2002 with 66 percent of them working 200 days or more. In 1997, 66 percent of principal operators who worked off the farm worked 200 days or more.

Thirty-nine percent of total women operators identified themselves as the principal operator of the farm. For these principal operators, 57 percent reported farming as their primary occupation, up 10 percentage points from 1997. Fifty percent worked off the farm in 2002, down eight percentage points from 1997. Fifty-two percent worked 200 or more days per year in 2002 compared with 55 percent in 1997.

**Rhode Island:** There were a total of 1,302 farm operators in 2002 on 865 farms, with 31 percent of total farm operators being women. The 2002 census also showed that 58 percent of Rhode Island's farms sold less than \$10,000 worth of agricultural products compared with 60 percent in the 1997 census. Thirty-four percent of the States's farms recorded sales of less than \$2,500 in 2002. Eighty-two percent were family or individually owned, up three percentage points from 1997. The average size of a farm was 71 acres in 2002, up from 65 acres per farm in 1997. Fifty-five percent of principal operators worked off the farm in 2002 with 69 percent of them working 200 days or more. In 1997, 70 percent of principal operators who worked off the farm worked 200 days or more.

Thirty-six percent of total women operators identified themselves as the principal operator of the farm. For these principal operators, 64 percent recorded farming as their primary occupation, up six percentage points

from 1997. Fifty percent worked off the farm in 2002 with 53 percent of them working 200 or more days per year. In 1997, 56 percent of women who worked off the farm worked 200 days or more.

**Vermont:** There were a total of 10,854 farm operators in 2002 on 6,596 farms. Thirty-three percent of total farm operators were women. The 2002 census showed that 62 percent of Vermont's farms sold less than \$10,000 worth of agricultural products compared with 57 percent in the 1997 census. Forty-two percent of the State's farms recorded sales of less than \$2,500 in 2002. Eighty-seven percent were family or individually owned, up one percentage point from 1997. The average farm size was 191 acres, an increase of five

acres from 1997. Fifty-four percent of principal operators worked off the farm in 2002 with 67 percent of them working 200 days or more. In 1997, 62 percent of the principal operators who worked off the farm worked 200 days or more.

Twenty-seven percent of total women operators identified themselves as the principal operator of the farm. For these principal operators, 52 percent reported farming as their primary occupation, unchanged from 1997. Fifty-three percent worked off the farm in 2002 with 57 percent of them working 200 or more days per year. In 1997, 53 percent of women who worked off the farm, worked 200 days or more.

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